

INTRAOCULAR LENS SYSTEM

Background of the Invention

This invention relates generally to the field of intraocular lenses (IOL) and, more particularly, to multi-lens IOLs.

5 The human eye in its simplest terms functions to provide vision by transmitting light through a clear outer portion called the cornea, and focusing the image by way of a crystalline lens onto a retina. The quality of the focused image depends on many factors including the size and shape of the eye, and the transparency of the cornea and the lens.

10 When age or disease causes the lens to become less transparent, vision deteriorates because of the diminished light which can be transmitted to the retina. This deficiency in the lens of the eye is medically known as a cataract. An accepted treatment for this condition is surgical removal of the lens and replacement of the lens function by an artificial intraocular lens (IOL).

15 In the United States, the majority of cataractous lenses are removed by a surgical technique called phacoemulsification. During this procedure, an opening is made in the anterior capsule and a thin phacoemulsification cutting tip is inserted into the diseased lens and vibrated ultrasonically. The vibrating cutting tip liquifies or emulsifies the lens so that the lens may be aspirated out of the eye. The diseased lens, once removed, is replaced by an artificial lens.

20 Prior to the present invention, when a cataract or other disease required the removal of the natural lens and replacement with an artificial IOL, the IOL was a monofocal lens. Most IOLs are sold in power increments of ± 0.5 diopters, and the ultimate power of the lens depends upon where the lens sits along the optical axis. The fixed increment of the lens, and the slight variation in lens placement can result in less than optimum vision. 25 Although this situation occurs relatively infrequently, and generally is not severe, some patients ultimately are required to use a pair of spectacles or contact lenses for optimum vision. If the power of the implanted lens is incorrect, removal and exchange of a new lens is difficult because of fibrosis of the lens haptics within the capsular bag.

30 There have been several prior suggested adjustable power IOLs, none of which have been commercially introduced. For example, U.S. Patent Nos. 5,222,981 (Werblin) and 5,358,520 (Patel), the entire contents of which being incorporated herein by reference,

suggest the use of a second or even a third optic that may be implanted and attached to a previously implanted primary optic so as to adjust the overall optic power of the multi-lens system. U.S. Patent Nos. 5,628,798 and 5,800,533 (Eggleston, et al.), the entire contents of which being incorporated herein by reference, disclose a threadedly adjustable IOL wherein the location of the optic along the visual axis may be adjusted. U.S. Patent No. 4,575,373 (Johnson), the entire contents of which being incorporated herein by reference, discloses an IOL having an optic and an outer ring and connections between the optic and the outer ring made from a heat-shrinkable plastic. The connections are heated with a laser to adjust the power of the IOL. U.S. Patent Nos. 4,919,151 and 5,026,783 (Grubbs, et al.), the entire contents of which being incorporated herein by reference, disclose a lens made from a polymer that swells or otherwise changes shape. The lens is implanted or injected into the capsule bag and selectively polymerized so as to adjust the power of the optic. U.S. Patent No. 5,571,177 (Deacon, et al.), the entire contents of which being incorporated herein by reference, discloses an IOL having haptics with frangible stiffeners. Once implanted in an eye, the stiffeners are selectively cut or heated above their t_g by laser radiation, causing the stiffness of the haptic to change and adjusting the location of the lens within the capsule bag. The multi-lens designs and the threadedly adjustable designs are not optimized for the reduction or elimination of posterior capsule opacification (PCO).

Therefore, a need continues to exist for a safe and stable intraocular lens system that provides adjustment of lens power.

Brief Summary of the Invention

The present invention improves upon the prior art by providing a two part lens system. The first part is a ring-like supporting component that is implanted in the capular bag following cataract surgery. The first component is a non-optical component and contains a pair of haptics for fixating the first component within the capular bag. The second component is an optical component that contains all of the corrective optical power of the lens system. The second component has a pair of tabs for locking the second component within the first component.

Accordingly, one objective of the present invention is to provide a safe and biocompatible intraocular lens.

Another objective of the present invention is to provide a safe and biocompatible intraocular lens that is easily implanted in the posterior chamber.

Still another objective of the present invention is to provide a safe and biocompatible intraocular lens that is stable in the posterior chamber.

5 Still another objective of the present invention is to provide a safe and biocompatible adjustable lens system.

Still another objective of the present invention is to provide a safe and biocompatible lens system that can be implanted through a small incision.

10 Still another objective of the present invention is to provide a safe and biocompatible lens system that helps reduce the incidence of PCO.

These and other advantages and objectives of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description and claims that follow.

Brief Description of the Drawing

15 FIG. 1 is an enlarged perspective view of the assembled lens system of the present system.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged plan view of the assembled lens system of the present system.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged cross-sectional view of the assembled lens system of the present system taken at line 3-3 in FIG. 2.

20 FIG. 4 is an enlarged plan view of the second component of the lens system of the present system.

FIG. 5 is an enlarged cross-sectional view of the second component of the lens system of the present system taken at line 5-5 in FIG. 4.

Detailed Description of the Invention

25 As best seen in FIGS. 1-3, lens system 10 of the present invention generally consists of first, or base, component 12 and second, or optical, component 14. Base component 12 is generally ring-like, having hollow center 11 and contains a plurality of integrally formed haptics 16 and is preferably formed in any suitable overall diameter, for

example, between approximately 10.0 millimeters and 12.0 millimeters, a suitable interior diameter, for example, between approximately 7.0 millimeters and 9.0 millimeters and made from a soft, foldable material such as a soft acrylic. Alternatively, base component 12 may be made from a material that is stiffer relative to optical component 14.

5 Preferably, base component 12 is constructed so as to allow it to be compressed and inserted into an eye through an incision of approximately 2.5 mm. Base component 12 may also be formed so as to be opaque, such as by frosting or texturing the anterior and/or posterior surfaces of base component 12. Base component 12 may also contain a chromophore to block ultraviolet and/or blue light, such chromophore(s) being well-known
10 in the art. As best seen in FIG. 3, posterior surface 13 of base component 12 preferably has a plurality of posterior circumferential rings or bands 18 that present a sharp, square edge against the posterior capsule, such sharp edges being widely believed to help inhibit PCO. Interior surface 18 of base component 12 contains locking slot 20 into which optical component 14 fits in the manner described below.

15 As best seen in FIGS. 4-5, optical component 14 is generally circular with an optic 15 having diameter D, for example, between approximately 4.0 millimeters and 7.0 millimeters. Optical component 14 tapers from being relatively thick in the middle to having a relatively thin, or sharp, edge that contains a plurality of tabs 22 integrally formed with optic 15 so as to give optical component 14 overall length L between
20 approximately 7.5 millimeters and 8.5 millimeters and preferably, is made from a soft, foldable material such as a soft acrylic. Lens component 14 may also contain a chromophore to block ultraviolet and/or blue light, such chromophore(s) being well-known in the art, but unlike base component 12, lens component 14 is optically clear.

As best seen in FIGS. 2 and 3, lens system 10 is assembled by placing tabs 22 of
25 lens component 14 in wide portions 21 of slots 20 and rotating lens component 14 slightly clockwise so as to lock tabs 22 within slots 20. In such an assembly, optical component 14 does not compress and vault during contraction of the capsular bag, because tabs 22 can slide inward and outward within slots 20 during compression of haptic 16 and base component 12. Such a construction makes lens component 14 very axially stable.

30 This description is given for purposes of illustration and explanation. It will be apparent to those skilled in the relevant art that changes and modifications may be made to the invention described above without departing from its scope or spirit.